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# *Christ*
## *at the Controls of Life*

• *N. B. Herrell*

# Christ at the Controls of Life

By

N. B. Herrell

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## INTRODUCTION

The timeless message of the Bible meets the needs of and presents a challenge to the people of any age. Much of the Old Testament message has its fulfillment in the New Testament, and at times there is found a striking parallel between the messages of each Testament. In this booklet the author interprets the message of the prophet Malachi in the light of our present day practices; it condemns carelessness in religious practices of today, just as severely as the prophet condemned those practices in the lives of the people of his day; and, likewise, its promised blessings are assured the faithful today as much as they were guaranteed to the faithful of that far off day. The author finds a striking resemblance between the message of reproof found in Malachi and the condemnation brought by Jesus against the seven churches of Asia in the revelation to the exiled Apostle on Patmos.

His use of the term "earnest tithe" is interesting for he recognizes that the whole of life, with all possessions, abilities, opportunities, etc., belongs to God, and he considers that portion of these which is actually given to or used for God as the "earnest tithe"—the earnest portion which binds the contract for the stewardship of all of life.

The author is no stranger to Nazarene people. His reputation among us as an exponent of the principles of Christian stewardship is such that just the mention of Rev. N. B. Herrell's name makes us think of stewardship. He was one of the first of the general leaders of

the church (for years he was General Secretary of Home Missions) to place special stress upon this important Christian truth. This booklet should be used widely for personal reading and study, also for study or discussion groups in local churches and institutes.

D. Shelby Corlett, *Editor*
*Herald of Holiness.*

## MY QUEST FOR WEALTH

By N. B. Herrell

I started out a youth with health,
I started out in quest of wealth;
I started with a courage strong—
My heart was thrilled with hope's sweet song.

I learned from teachers, books and rules,
I learned from wise men and from fools;
I learned from nature far and wide—
Then set up wealth as goal and guide.

I dreamed of treasures, rich and rare,
I dreamed of castles here and there;
I dreamed and dreamed, I could not fail—
Till like old Jonah, I met my whale.

I figured wealth in terms of cash,
I figured wealth without a crash;
I figured wealth improved the man—
And left God out of every plan.

I stopped, I sat, I thought and thought!
I went to God and there I sought;
I begged of Him to save from strife—
There, found the goal posts for my life.

I found that wealth of sea and land,
Would never reach the golden strand;
My richest gain, I've come to see,
Is personality, God's gift to me.

## CHRIST AT THE CONTROLS OF LIFE

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Malachi 3:10).

It was the skillful Charles A. Lindbergh who, at the controls of the airplane, *Spirit of St. Louis,* lifted the silver ship from her runway at New York and piloted her across the Atlantic wilderness of water, grounding her safely at the goal-port near the city of Paris, France. This pioneer achievement of Colonel Lindbergh's wrote his name into the pages of modern history as a benefactor to progress in transoceanic flying.

Christ at the central controls of human personality is God's supreme challenge to every man, woman, boy and girl. The human personality is dynamic. It is potent with talent which can be cultivated for good or evil. Christ and Satan are the two master pilots of human destiny. As personalities we are vested with the grave responsibility of choosing which of the two shall be our pilot to guide us to our final destination.

God sent His Son into the world to lift the ceiling and roll back the sky line of human personality. Life, with Christ at the central controls, is radiant with His presence, vibrant with His inspiration, and overflowing with joyful hope and expectation of faith. Like the radio beam which the pilots follow when flying blind, the precious promises, signals of divine presence, guide our

course across the hills, valleys and plains of life. The promises of God flash their challenging beam to you, to me, to all who desire to follow the King's highway of holiness into the holy city.

Redemption, in its broadest meaning, defines the scope of the particular purchased possession of Christ. It includes all things spiritual and material, on earth and in heaven. Christ is the adorable Head of His Church, the High Priest over His household of faith. He is the King of kings and Lord of all; and His kingdom is carried on forever after the order of the priesthood and kingship of Melchisedec and his faithful colaborer and friend, Abraham. (See Genesis 14:18-20; Hebrews 7.) The tithes and offerings are an earnest which Christ has reserved for Himself, out of His purchased possession, over which He has all authority both in heaven and in earth. The Holy Spirit is the Chief Steward over the earthly possession of Christ. The Holy Spirit gives direction to the affairs of Christ's kingdom among men as Eliezer, the steward of Abraham's house, did for Abraham. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit were present and gave direction to the order of Melchisedec and Abraham. They also were present and directed the order of Moses and Aaron. They all were present when the order of Christ's kingdom was set up at Pentecost. Melchisedec, Abraham, Moses and Aaron have passed from the scene. We have God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit with us today. We are thankful for the types, shadows and the good examples of the yesterdays, but what are we going to do about the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Will God require less of us in our day and generation than He did of them?

Christ himself is the standard of values within His kingdom. Human personality, as it is related to Him through grace, occupies the first rank in value of His purchased possession. While all of earth is a part of His purchased possession, only that portion under the care of His faithful stewards can be considered a convertible asset to His cause and kingdom. As Lord and Master, Christ has the sole right to say how, when and where His purchased possession, both human personality and things, is to be managed and used by His chief steward, the Holy Spirit. Loyalty to Christ is the song of the Holy Spirit. The motive of love thus becomes the basis of stewardship.

## CHRIST AT THE CONTROLS OF OUR LOVE

*I have loved you, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us?* (Malachi 1:2).

Christ at the central controls of our affections gives quality and motivation to the will, which is the ego, the very man himself, from whence spring and flow all the issues of life. We love that which we are like, and we are like that which we love. In the setting of the sails of our affections, we determine the destiny of the soul. The three competitive substitutes offered man to take the place of love of God are as follows: (1) The love of self. (2) The love of money. (3) The love of the world. The Pilot of Galilee is the only one who offers to guide our frail barque through the dissolution of the present world order, into the sinless and deathless order of the world to come.

"God is a Spirit." "God is love." They who worship God acceptably must worship Him out of the overflow of love inspired affections. Christ must be the central figure, occupying all the universe of our personality. "I have loved you, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us?" The blessed Lord could well answer this ghastly echo from out the depths of a dead heart, in the following language: (1) "I have loved you with a creative love." (2) "I have loved you with an eternal love." (3) "I have loved you with a fatherly affectionate love." (4) "I have loved you passionately." (5) "I have loved you individually." (6) "I have loved you with a rewarding love." (7) "I have loved you with an all wise, unfailing, eternal love." In return for His bountiful love, we can reciprocate thus: (1) With a grateful love. (2) With an elective love. (3) With a satisfied love. (4) With an affecionate love. (5) With a sympathetic love. (6) With a benevolent love. (7) With an adoring love. "Herein is our love made perfect"—that we worship God in spirit and in truth.

The sole ground for mutual fellowship between God and His people is that of perfect love. God has declared Himself to be the holy God. Hence, being holy, God cannot fellowship other than holy personalities. Sin, so to speak, freezes the higher and finer sensibilities. Instead of life more abundant, there is death. Instead of the fullness of love, there is jealousy. Instead of the milk of kindness, there is hate. Instead of the grace of appreciation, there is rank ingratitude. Instead of the spirit of humility and simplicity, there is an attitude of arrogance and self-conceit. Instead of a walk with God, every inclination in

thought, word and deed is to evil. Dead hearts do not respond to the tender, affectionate love of God. The church at Ephesus left her first love for God, and so far as we know she never regained this lost ground. It is dangerous to trifle with eternal verities. God is not mocked by the lukewarm love of His people. Dead hearts in either pulpit or pew are an abomination to God; they have no interest in what the Holy Spirit has to say to the churches.

Across a thousand generations comes the still small voice of God calling to His ministers and train of worshipers. "I have loved you, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us?" Lazarus, though physically dead, responded to the voice of his Lord and came forth out of the tomb. Yet the cold, lifeless heart of a preacher or layman lies quiet in its sepulcher while the Lord of glory knocks just outside the door and pleads for love motivated fellowship. "I have loved you, saith the Lord." Listen to the ghastly, sickening echo from out the depths, "Wherein hast thou loved us?"

## CHRIST AT THE CONTROLS OF OUR DEVOTION

*A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?* (Malachi 1:6).

Christ at the central controls of our devotional life gives joy to the heart, peace to the mind and light to the pathway. It was Isaac Watts who sang the immortal words:

"When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride."

As he gazed upon the bleeding Lamb, he continued:

"Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my God;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood."

He seems to kneel a bit closer to the cross, then cries:

"See, from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?"

Thrilled with wonder, love and praise, he shouts:

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

The devotional life tests the quality of our love, the fidelity of our faith, and the strength of our convictions. By way of illustration: The "mute eloquence of a mother's fidelity is her carved effigy, dressed in her own clothes, which stands in an open window of a house in Bruges, Belgium. When her son went to war in 1914, she promised to watch at that window for him to return. Refusing to believe reports that he had been killed, she continued her vigil until bed-ridden, when she had the effigy put in her place. She and her son have been dead for years, but the silent figure still watches the road leading to Liege." God always keeps His appointments with His people. But when we fail God in devotion, we are the losers in every way.

Our devotional life provides food for the inner man. There can be no substitute for this. The inner man hungers for the knowledge of Christ, and thirsts for the renewing of the Holy Spirit in Christ. We can list but a few of the means of grace. (1) Faith comes by hearing the Word of God. (2) Prayer is the voice of the soul in communion with God. (3) Fasting will enrich the soul and renew the inner man with power for service. (4) Public worship gives liberty to the whole personality as nothing else can. (5) The Sunday school provides opportunity to give service as well as to receive help. (6) Foreign missionary work gives one an opportunity to express his love for others in an unselfish manner that develops the Christlike spirit. (7) When visiting the sick, widows, orphans and prisoners, we are reminded how much the Lord has blessed us and that we need to show our appreciation to Him by helping others to know Him. (8) Midweek prayermeeting is the coaling station between Sundays, which we need for refiring and refueling for the battles ahead. (9) Confessing our faults one to another will save us from becoming critical of others. (10) Guarding our conversation and improving our personal testimony will prove a means of grace. (11) Reading papers, books, and good literature for improving the mind is helpful. (12) Meditating upon the Word of God, the sermons we hear and the songs we sing will keep the mind filled with the better things of life. Devotional living really means taking time to be holy.

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death" (Revelation 2:11).

## CHRIST AT THE CONTROLS OF OUR SERVICE

*Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the Lord is contemptible* (Malachi 1:7).

Christ at the central controls of our Christian duty affords dignity and value to the smallest service we may render. God through His Son offers His people a partnership in His business of evangelizing the world. He does not offer you a job, a salary, or even a livelihood. He makes His servants shareholders in the enterprise. Evangelizing the race is the world's first and largest co-operative conquest. What are you going to do with this challenging offer? God has capitalized the undertaking with heaven's richest jewel, the gift of His only begotten Son. What are we to put into the enterprise? The whole of our redeemed personality. Is that too much? Can we match God's gift with anything less? What is the measure of our contribution?

For anything we do for Christ we shall not lose our reward, be it a simple service as offering, in His dear name, a cup of cold water to the thirsty, or the supreme sacrifice in giving life itself for the sake of the kingdom. Dr. George D. Watson says, "Our usefulness in service depends on how clearly we apprehended the interest of God's kingdom, and how closely we put ourselves in sympathy with God's personal feeling; how lovingly and perseveringly we seek to do His service, for His own sake and in the way we apprehend that He would have done it were He in our stead." Workers with God in the

great harvest field—not dreamers—is the call and need of the hour.

In speaking of service both Christ and David give us the key to the co-operative manner in which we are to proceed. "Lo, I come: . . . I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea thy law is within my heart." The words, "Lo, I come," reveal the strong, love dominated determination of the whole personality to do the will of God. Out of the overflow of our devotion we find delight in doing the known will of God.

Dr. D. Shelby Corlett says, "Love was the inspiration of the cross, also, that love must be the inspiration of our cross bearing." We do best the thing we love to do. The wholly sanctified heart is tuned to the will of God. His thoughts become the meditation of my heart, the desire of my soul, and the conquest of my life. His ways I find to be higher than my ways; His thoughts deeper, broader, higher, and reaching farther into the future than mine. To rethink His thoughts enlarges and rolls back the sky line of my life for development, service and growth.

There is but one throne in the human personality. Hence, there is but one paramount question we may settle in this life. Which of the two, Christ or Satan, is to reign on that throne? Both cannot be supreme, or a part of each reign, but, *which* of the two? Will it be Christ and grace or Satan and self? No man can serve two masters; he must ally himself with one or the other. We cannot offer God a divided allegiance. God waits for each man and woman to answer the question for himself. Christ or Satan: which will it be? We cannot offer polluted bread (unsound doctrine) to God as acceptable service. Life to be co-operative with God of necessity

must follow along the course of sound scriptural lines. Paganized worship is idolatry. Truth alone can set men free.

"I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold to the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold to the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate. . . . He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it" (Revelation 2:14, 15, 17).

## CHRIST AT THE CONTROLS OF OUR TESTIMONY

*Ye have wearied the Lord with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?* (Malachi 2:17).

Blessed indeed is the man who puts Christ at the central controls of his conversation. What power, for good or ill, there is in words! Thoughtlessly spoken they may blast a reputation, break a heart, or destroy a friendship. Clarence Edward Macartney has this to say about the greatest words in the Bible and in human speech: *Sin* is the saddest word; *forgiveness* the most beautiful; *now* is the word that never comes back; *no* is the hardest word; *whisperer* is the meanest word; *come* is God's favorite word; *tomorrow* is the most dangerous word; *why*

is the most mysterious word; *if* the weakest word; *repent* is the word that opens heaven; *heaven* is the word that takes in all others; *memory* is the sweetest and the bitterest word; *prayer* is the word that conquers God; *experience* is the word that is the greatest teacher.

May we add to the list one more outstanding key word of the Holy Scriptures—the *word* of our testimony, exalting the blood of the Lamb, which will overcome the devil.

Jesus, in establishing His kingdom among men, asked His disciples, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" "Some say," they answered, "that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets." The record continues: "He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The comment of Christ on Peter's words, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," reveals the outstanding importance that Christ places upon our personal testimony as it is related to Himself, God the Father, eternal life and the work of the church on earth. Personal testimony is essential to growth in grace and the spread of the gospel among men.

"Follow me," said Jesus, "and I will make you fishers of men." From this we see that God does not call us for what we are worth, at the time He calls, but for what He knows grace and truth can make of us. The Holy Spirit transforms our lives into the likeness and image of Him

who calls to His service. Out of the overflow of a rich personal experience of divine grace we grow by giving testimony to the power of the blood and the resurrection of Christ. Christian personality wholly and thoroughly sanctified by the Holy Ghost is never static. We are the living witnesses of what Christ has done for us. We love to tell the old, old story of Jesus and His love.

An uncertain testimony wearies the Lord. When we call the evil good and the good evil, our witnessing does not help us or the cause of Christ. When we lose the sense of divine presence in our personal Christian experience and broaden out to take in the evil doer as a brother in the Lord, and forget that God is a jealous God, we grieve God and drive the Holy Spirit from our life. God will not tolerate sin in the life or in His glorious presence. Jesus appeals to us in the following language. "He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Revelation 2:26-29).

## CHRIST AT THE CONTROLS OF OUR LOYALTY

*Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?* (Malachi 3:7).

A young Russian emigrant interrupted Josiah Royce while he was lecturing on the subject of "Loyalty," with

these searching words: "Loyalty," cried the young man, "has been humanity's most disastrous failing and weakness. Tyrants, both religious and political, have used the spirit of loyalty as their most valuable tool. I am glad," said he, "that we are outgrowing this thing called loyalty. We want enlightenment that makes men equal in the liberty and right to live without fear of those who rule over us." Frederick K. Stamm asked the question, "Is there no place in life where loyalty should operate? Have we become so progressive that we are to be guided by the human inclinations permitted to run riot?" To these questions we can make positive reply, "With Christ at the central controls of life's conflicting loyalties we will be guided safely through all difficulty and confusion. He knows, He understands the way we take. Poor sin twisted humanity loses the way to life and liberty when it fails to accept Christ as pilot."

Yes, indeed, there is a place in life for loyalty to function with grace and dignity. Loyalty to Christ is provoked in His followers by the gracious inspiration of His glorious personality, as their personal Savior and Lord. Christ as Redeemer brings to His people victory over the world, the flesh and the devil. Christianity alone offers the young Russian that which his heart longs for and his life craves. Christianity answers the question of Frederick K. Stamm. Genuine Christianity means loyalty to Christ, sound doctrine, vital Christian experience and fidelity to the cause of world-wide evangelism.

However, it is of interest to all that we deal a little more personally with the thought of loyalty. Real friendship must be built on love that is sincere and loyal. This friendship that is the basis of the fellowship between fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, neighbors and friends

must of necessity, if Christian, be inspired by the overflow of loyalty to Christ and to each other. We cannot be loyal to Christ and at the same time disloyal to each other. If we love Christ acceptably, we must love one another agreeably. Loyalty puts the element of constancy into the warp and woof of our Christian personality. It is the driving force of perseverance in our faith. Loyalty is the mainspring of Christian courage. If we are not loyal to the friends whom we see and know, how can we hope to be loyal to Him whom we serve by faith?

Loyalty to Christ overflows into the streams of loyalty to the leadership of His Church. Fellowship in worship means co-operation in service. A loyal worshiper is always a loyal servant. A true Christian finds his greatest joy in co-operative sacrificial service. Loyalty without the elements of sacrifice and service is not loyalty in any form. The spirit of loyalty is to defend, protect, and to serve that which it is loyal to. Hence, if we are first loyal to Christ as our personal Savior, we will find it quite easy to be loyal to the leadership of His Church, and to the interest of His cause. The Prophet Malachi charged Israel with disloyalty when he said, "Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?" Then in Revelation 3:5, 6, we read, "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches."

## CHRIST AT THE CONTROLS OF OUR POSSESSIONS

*Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation* (Malachi 3:8, 9).

Christ at the central controls of our possessions makes Him the King eternal, Lord of all over that portion of the purchased possession entrusted to our stewardship. This, like all other passages of the Scriptures, is of no private interpretation. It strikes at two vital points in Christian experience. (1) God's standard of consecration. (2) God's sovereign right to demand obedience. God's standard of consecration is revealed in Abraham's relationship with Melchisedec (Genesis 14:18-23); also in the attitude of the prayermeeting of the five thousand, "Neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own" (Acts 4:32). Christian consecration acknowledges the sovereign ownership of God and the stewardship of man. This acknowledgment must be genuine and practical; it is the ground of our faith and gives us courage to obey God at all costs. Any weakness on the part of our consecration will certainly show up in our effort to do the will of God. If we know that our consecration is acceptable to God, we will have faith to carry that consecration into effect. No Christian is better than his consecration. Christian consecration, so to speak, is the take-off field in our service for God.

Obedience to the known will of God is essential to life eternal. It was disobedience that put Adam and

Eve out of the Garden of Eden. It was the disobedience of one man that made it necessary that another should give His life in obedience to atone for the sins of the guilty. God is no respecter of persons. It matters not whether the offense is eating forbidden fruit or stealing tithes and offerings; the results are just the same. God does not tolerate disobedience in any one, at any time, in any place or for any reason.

Samuel said, "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice." Saul lost his relationship with God and his kingdom by disobeying God in taking a few choice cattle and sheep. Satan seems to think that every Christian has his price and proceeds to tempt us at every conceivable point. With some it is stealing time so they have no time to worship God at home or in the church. With others it is just the opposite; they monopolize the service so that other worshipers have no opportunity to exercise their gifts of testimony, prayer and so on. There are many other ways to rob God besides withholding His tithes and offerings of material things. When we withhold in any way from God, we impoverish ourselves. Poverty, if chosen deliberately because it is within the will of God, never hurts anyone.

There is a universal retribution that follows the sin of robbery whether it involves robbing God or our fellowman. "Thou shalt not steal" is mandatory upon all, Christians as well as sinners. There is more oratory and ink used to pull the teeth out of this rugged bit of Scripture than almost any other two verses in the Holy Book. Yet after all has been said, the question still remains the same: "Will a man rob God?" This verse has to do with material tithes and offerings which God has reserved for Himself out of the purchased possession. This text is so

expressed that it has in it the ways and means of both the minimum and the maximum giving. No one has given an offering until he has given into the church treasury his tithes; after this all that he cares to give he may count as an offering. Few ever exceed the minimum standard of giving, which is the paying of tithes only; the maximum includes offerings as well as tithes. To deny or discredit the necessity for bringing in to the church treasury the tithes of our material blessings will often discourage those who feel their obligation to do this. The leaders must set the example, for after all, example is the strongest and most effective way to lead the flock of God. A pastor who falters at this point fails God and his church, and his influence for ill in this regard is more far-reaching than that of any other leader in all the church.

God deals with the personality of His kingdom rather than with the ways and means. Bringing in His tithes and offerings are the ways and means of supplying His house with the necessary funds to carry on His program of world evangelism. His blessing for cheerful obedience is promised to His people. But sure retribution overtakes any individual who refuses to obey His will. God's kingdom is not of this world, nor is His order of procedure. He expects His twice-born men to adjust themselves to the order of the new and living way of life in Christ. The curse, like the blessing of God, is meted out to the personality or individual. Leanness of soul will come to the pastor and people who refuse to obey God in the practical things of the Christian life. There can be no substitutes for the tithes and offerings which God has reserved for Himself out of the purchased possession through redemption.

Hark! 'tis the Father's voice we hear,
Calling His children far and near;
"Bring to my house, my tithes today,
Then I will take all plagues away."

Who'll go and work in field and mill?
Who'll go and do the Father's will?
Who'll go and prove the promise true?
Say, can the Lord depend on you?

Who'll help to win lost souls today?
Who'll go and labor, watch and pray?
Who'll bring the tithes to pay the cost?
That's the way they did at Pentecost.

If we will bring in all God's tithes,
He'll open windows in the skies;
Pour us out a blessing full and free,
Then will come the year of Jubilee.

"Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Revelation 3:11-13).

## CHRIST AT THE CONTROLS OF OUR DESIRES

*Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee? Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered* (Malachi 3:13-15).

Christ at the central controls of our desires gives poise, purpose and Christian motivation to the whole of our personality. Dr. R. T. Williams says, "Desire is God-implanted, constitutional, natural and useful." To the sanctified wholly, their desires can be likened unto a great switchboard, with the Holy Spirit inspired will as the operator. When Satan rings up a number, the operator calls back, "Line busy." When the Lord rings a number, connection is quickly made with the whole of the personality, which promptly replies, "At your service." A passive will is like an operator who opens the switch, then goes to sleep, while the callers and talkers fight it out amid confusion and chaos. The will occupies the throne room of the personality and the desires connect the throne room with the outposts of the personality. The will is the purchasing agent of the soul, buying up the opportunities offered in the markets of each generation. Dr. J. A. Huffman has said, "It is only by the will's consent that thoughts can tarry in the mind, and only by the will's command are thoughts given forth in speech,

or otherwise." We are what we are because we will to be what we are. Like the propeller on the modern airplane, our desires inspire us with a propelling zeal that becomes dynamic. An active will in the things of God always produces a positive attitude in the personality. When Mr. Will marries Miss Desire, the first child born to this union is Miss Motive. In the household of faith this family prospers in whatsoever they do.

King David tells us, "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart" (Psalm 37:4). He continues, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward" (Psalm 19:7-11). Again David speaks, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee?" Yet, God charged the children of Israel with breaking in their desire for Him His reign over them. "Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee? Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered" (Malachi 3:13, 14).

"Behold, I stand at the door," said Jesus, "and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Revelation 3:20-22).

## CHRIST AT THE CONTROLS OF OUR TITHES

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him" (Malachi 3:16, 17).

Eternal life, as interpreted by Christ, is a trust from God to us His stewards. Christ estimates all values by that greatest value, namely, what human personality might become through grace in the ages to come. Life eternal cannot be properly estimated by what it can accomplish in the limited space of threescore years and ten. If I am to live forever, will I not continue to grow in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ? Christ rolled back the sky line of redeemed personality when, in His resurrection, He brought life and immortality to light. There is not enough room in time for the eternal growth of the redeemed. What I am and what I do in the will of God this side of death only indicates what

I will be and do in the will of God beyond death. Paul tells us, "That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." I now have eternal life in Christ. I am an immortal being through Christ. True, I will leave my body at death for His more excellent glory, but at the resurrection of the body I will be clothed upon with a body like unto His glorious body. With Paul we can say, "To live is Christ, and to die is gain." As we discover God's will in Christ for us, the horizon of our personality keeps rolling back to give room for our growth in grace and labors of love. We are to continue to grow and bear fruit in our last days on earth as we did during our earlier years.

1. To bring into God's house the earnest-tithes of all His purchased possession means infinitely more than rendering to Him merely the earnest-tithes of His earthly possession entrusted to our stewardship. In our faulty evaluation of money we overlook the more important factors, vital to His cause and kingdom in both this world and that which is to come. The first standard of value set up by Christ in His kingdom is this, "Christ Jesus, who gave Himself into the hands of His Father, to be a ransom for all." Through grace Christ imparts value to human personality. The value of material things is of only minor importance in the work of redemption. The greater part of life eternal will be enjoyed far beyond the need and reach of time and things of earth. Hence, the earnest-tithe of our first love, brought to the courts of the Lord's house, overflowing our redeemed personality, is the ranking tithe of all the earnest-tithes of the purchased possession. In that local church where the earnest-tithe is not brought in, devoutly and faithfully,

as meat for the house of God, the vision, passion and evangelistic fervor will die just as it did in the church at Ephesus. This is the major emphasis in the order of procedure in the priesthood and kingship of Melchisedec and Abraham. It is also the order of Christ's kingdom as set up at Pentecost.

2. The earnest-tithe of our personal devotion is the second ranking tithe to be brought in as meat for the house of God. Christ set His personal devotion to His Father as a standard of value in His kingdom, for redeemed personality. The one and only true test of my love for Christ is my personal devotion to Him in my daily life. Out of the many earthly demands for my devotion, I must take time out to go personally to His house of worship, and unite my earnest-tithe of heart devotion with that of the rest of His saints. I owe this to Christ, to myself, to my family, to my neighbors, to my community and to the world at large.

3. The earnest-tithe of my service, which includes time and effort, representing my strength, is to be brought into the storehouse and placed at the disposal of my Lord's cause in and about the community. Christ set up the standard of service as a value in the Christian life. We serve, not for filthy lucre's sake, but for Christ's sake. The pinchpenny service of many professed Christians is disappointing to Christ and a disgrace to His church. We are to do service for Him out of the overflow of our heart's love and devotion. Service follows devotion just as the blossom follows the bud. Who will be a willing worker for Christ?

4. The earnest-tithe of my conversation is to be brought into the church in the form of a testimony for Christ. Our Lord was a true and faithful witness, glori-

fying the Father. We are to be faithful witnesses of Christ. There is nothing that can take the place of a personal testimony. Christ has placed value on this means of grace, and the church cannot progress without its witnesses.

5. The earnest-tithe of our loyalty to Christ and His cause is indeed a challenging term. Yet, Christ by His loyalty to the Father and His new way of life through death has set up a new standard of loyalty within His kingdom not known and but little understood by the kingdoms of this world. Love endures what it cannot cure, for love is able to endure all things. It will endure till time shall be no more, and then will reign supreme. On earth is love, and in heaven above He is love. Hence, perfect love produces a loyalty that is stronger than death.

6. The earnest-tithe of material possessions entrusted to our management, with an offering as great as the Holy Spirit might indicate, gladly brought to the church treasury, is the order of the priesthood of both Melchisedec and Christ. This order of giving begins with the minimum which is the earnest-tithe and culminates in offerings as directed by the Holy Spirit, until the maximum of giving is reached. The Holy Spirit as chief steward of Christ over His household of faith is vested with the authority to give direction to all stewards as to the tithes and offerings, after the order of Melchisedec and Abraham. Amen.

7. The earnest-tithe of our love motivated desires is to be faithfully brought into the house of divine worship as an individual contribution to the life and work of the church. Christ never swerved in His desire and purpose to do the Father's will. Love made perfect inspires the

desire for more love, a greater devotion, a better service, a richer testimony, a finer loyalty, a more faithful and a larger support, and greater progress along all lines of gospel evangelism throughout the world. Amen.

In conclusion, to bring in to the local church all the earnest-tithes as set forth in the holy Scriptures, according to the order of Melchisedec and Christ, and also as contained in the challenging text of this book, would be as follows. Each member of each local church is expected to and should bring to the house of worship each Lord's day: (1) The earnest-tithe of love made perfect. (2) The earnest-tithe of heartfelt devotion. (3) The earnest-tithe of willing service. (4) The earnest-tithe of personal testimony. (5) The earnest-tithe of an unmixed loyalty. (6) The earnest-tithe of material possessions and offerings. (7) The earnest-tithe of a consuming desire for Christ, His cause and kingdom. Now as the capsheaf let us prayerfully quote the promise and accept the challenge.

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Malachi 3:10).

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Revelation 22:14).